

Marriages Issues & the Tribunal

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Collaborators In Ministry: RCIA Ministers & Tribunal Ministers

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Collaborators in Ministry

Tribunal Ministers

&

Parish Ministers, specifically **RCIA Ministers**

What comes to mind
when you think of Tribunal ministry?

Collaborators in Ministry: Tribunal Ministry

What is a Tribunal?

Church Court

Recall **Archbishop** is our Chief Shepherd, our Chief Catechist; he is also our **Chief Judge**.

He establishes the **Tribunal**, or the Court of the Archdiocese.

He cannot hear every case himself, so he exercises his authority to judge through a **Judicial Vicar**.

The **Judicial Vicar** leads the **Tribunal** for the Archbishop and is supported by clergy and laity, who are specifically approved and appointed for their ministry in the Tribunal.

Collaborators in Ministry: Tribunal Ministry

What is the purpose of the Tribunal?

To protect the rights of faithful and all others who are entitled to approach the Tribunal regarding their rights within the Catholic Church.

This purpose is most often exercised in assisting people who request that the Church examine **the status of a marriage** and their **freedom to marry in the Catholic Church**.

Collaborators in Ministry: Tribunal Ministry

Marriage nullity cases answer the question:

Is this marriage invalid?

A decision **in favor of the bond** means the marriage should continue to be presumed valid.

A decision **in favor of nullity** means the marriage has been proven to be invalid in the eyes of the Church.

A declaration of nullity (aka annulment) is granted.

The marriage is on trial, not the people.

Declaration of Marriage Nullity (aka Annulment)

A declaration of marriage nullity is a determination by a Tribunal that a particular marriage has been proven invalid in the eyes of the Church.

Marriage

Marriage possesses the favor of law; therefore, in a case of doubt, the validity of a marriage must be upheld until the contrary is proven.

(c. 1060)

Whether the marriage involves a Catholic or not, the Church presumes marriages are valid unless proven otherwise.

Collaborators in Ministry

Tribunal Ministers and RCIA Ministers help those desiring to enter the Catholic Church.

We share the good news about the Lord and about marriage, specifically marriage without the possibility of divorce.

Many of those desiring to enter the Catholic Church are divorced persons.

Marriage Issues

1. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and has been divorced in the past but has never remarried?
2. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and is currently married but the person, or his or her current spouse, was previously divorced?

Marriage Issues

1. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and has been divorced in the past but has never remarried?

While **there is nothing standing in the way of a divorced person receiving the Easter Sacraments**, it is only right that we should help him or her understand that, because the Catholic Church holds marriage in such high esteem between all persons, not just Catholics, **the prior marriage is presumed to be valid.**

He or she would not be free to marry again in the Catholic Church unless all prior marriages are proven to be invalid.

Marriage Issues

1. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and has been divorced in the past but has never remarried?

It would be prudent for the person to resolve any prior bonds by petitioning the Church for a declaration of marriage nullity for all prior marriages.

Marriage Issues

2. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and is currently married but the person, or his or her current spouse, was previously divorced?

Because the Church holds marriage between all persons, Catholic or not, in such high esteem, the couple finds themselves in **an irregular situation**, with a potentially valid marriage to someone else preventing them from valid marriage to each other. Of course, they may have been completely ignorant of the problem at the time they were married to one another.

Marriage Issues

2. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and is currently married but the person, or his or her current spouse, was previously divorced?

These situations demand the most pastoral sensitivity and attention
The pastor should be made aware of the couple's need.

The pastor's discretion in working with the particular couple should be respected and observed.

Marriage Issues

2. What if a person desires to enter the Catholic Church and is currently married but the person, or his or her current spouse, was previously divorced?

One possible solution, would be for the couple to petition the Tribunal for a Declaration of Marriage Nullity for all prior marriages. The person entering the Catholic Church could continue to mature in faith through an extended Catechumenate, while waiting for the result of any petition.

Marriage Issues

<u>Jack</u>	<u>Jill</u>	
b. 1/1/1980	b. 1/1/1982	
m. 2/14/2000	m. 10/31/2000	
d. 2/13/2010	d. 1/1/2007	
m. 6/1/2010		
d. 7/1/2010		
	m.	
_____	7/26/2020	_____

Your Questions

Scripture Reflection: September 22, 2021

Today's Gospel: Luke 9:1-6

Jesus sent the Apostles
to Proclaim the Kingdom of God
and to Heal the Sick.

Then they set out
Proclaiming the Good News
and Curing Diseases Everywhere.

Thank you for your ministry!

Contact Information

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Our Tribunal is here to serve you!